



ARMY EMERGENCY RELIEF

2026-2027 Mrs. Patty Shinseki Spouse Scholarship Program for Spouses of Active, Retired and Deceased Soldiers



GENERAL INFORMATION

Army Emergency Relief (AER) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing financial assistance to Soldiers and their families during times of genuine emergency. Since 1976, AER has also offered scholarships to help Army families with undergraduate education costs.

We communicate primarily by email. To ensure you receive important updates, please add scholarships@aerhq.org and angie.pratt@aerhq.org to your contacts. If you have questions or need help during the application process, email scholarships@aerhq.org.

SCHOLARSHIP DETAILS

The Mrs. Patty Shinseki Spouse Scholarship Program provides financial assistance for eligible spouses pursuing their first undergraduate degree. Eligible applicants include:

- Spouses of active duty or retired Soldiers
- Widows/widowers of Soldiers who died on active duty or in retired status
- Spouses of National Guard/Reserve Soldiers activated on **Title 10 orders**

Note: Spouses of Soldiers who separated without retiring are not eligible.

- Scholarships are awarded **based solely on financial need**, as shown by the **Student Aid Index (SAI)** on your FAFSA Submission Summary. Please review the FAFSA instructions on the AER website for details.
- Scholarships are **not guaranteed nor automatic**. Award amounts may change annually based on the organizational budget, number of applicants, and **full-time or part-time enrollment**.
- Applications are accepted **year-round**. Review the application **Schedule (page 3)** for application submission and award timelines.
- Award recipients may receive funding for up to **four academic years** (full-time equivalent). Students are required to apply **each academic year** (fall, spring, and summer).
- After an application is approved, awardees will receive an **award notification email** with the amount based upon enrollment. Awardees will receive a separate email with the upcoming semester's award amount prior to the semester annotated on the application. The **Schedule** contains the date email notifications are sent.
- Scholarship funds are sent **directly to educational institutions** each semester (by mail or electronic transfer, depending on the educational institution). Funds may be used for **tuition, fees, books, and supplies**.

HOW TO APPLY

- **Read this entire document first.** It contains important details that will help you avoid delays, extra emails, and confusion.
- **Apply online:** <https://aerhq.academicworks.com>
- **Create or access your account:**
 - First-time applicants: **Sign up**.
 - Returning applicants: **Sign in using the SAME email address you used before. Do NOT create a new account with a different email.**
- You may be prompted to create a **Blackbaud ID**. Use the **same email address** as your existing account.
- If you cannot remember your login information, email scholarships@aerhq.org.
- **General Application (new applicants only):**
 - After entering your name, you will automatically be directed to the Mrs. Patty Shinseki Spouse Scholarship Program application.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Awardees must be a **dependent spouse** and listed as such in **DEERS**.
- Awardees must be pursuing your **first undergraduate degree** (full-time or part-time) at an accredited college, university, or vocational educational institution listed in the U.S. Department of Education's accreditation database.
 - Second bachelor's degrees may be considered on a **case-by-case** basis.
 - The scholarship **cannot** be used for graduate-level coursework.
- Awardees must maintain a **minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0** on a 4.0 scale.
- Awardees must **not** be on active duty, in the Reserve/National Guard, or retired from any military branch.
 - Students attending **Military Service Academies** are not eligible as the financial need is already met.
- If you receive other financial aid (e.g., GI Bill, MyCAA, VA benefits, or other scholarships), your AER scholarship may be **reduced**. Your educational institution's **Financial Aid Office** will determine your final eligibility based on your full aid package.
 - Any AER scholarship funds not needed once awardees' costs are covered will be **returned to AER** and cannot be paid directly to you.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

The application and all required documents must be submitted **online and in PDF form**. **Do not email documents**.

APPLICATION

The 2026-2027 Application is available by 1 June 2026.

DD Form 214

If the **Student** has prior military service, upload the Student's DD Form 214 in the appropriate question. If the Sponsor is retired, please upload the Soldier's DD Form 214 in the appropriate question.

END OF MONTH (EOM) LEAVE AND EARNINGS STATEMENT (LES)

If the Sponsor is on active duty, the most recent End of Month LES must be uploaded. **Do not upload Orders unless the Soldier is on Title 10 Orders.**

TRANSCRIPTS

Unofficial transcripts are acceptable. Transcripts **must** show the student's name, educational institution name, all college course work through the student's most recently completed semester/term, and cumulative GPA based on a 4.0 scale. If you have not attended college previously, please upload a letter stating this is the first time the applicant is going to be enrolled in college classes and enter the cumulative GPA as 2.0.

2026-2027 FAFSA SUMMARY

The FAFSA Submission Summary from the FAFSA application is used to determine each applicant's need. The 2026-2027 FAFSA must be completed at <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>. FAFSA will notify the applicant when the FAFSA Submission Summary can be downloaded from the FAFSA website. We require the complete FAFSA Submission Summary; please do not upload FAFSA emails, confirmations, or any other correspondence from FAFSA. **Refer to our FAFSA Instructions for guidance.**

TITLE 10 ORDERS & EOM LES (required for all US Army Reserve, National Guard, and AGR Sponsor)

If the Sponsor is on Title 10 Active Guard Reserve, Reserve, and/or National Guard orders, please upload a copy of the Title 10 Orders reflecting federal activation for the entire academic year and most recent EOM LES. **The dates of federal activation and ETS date must be annotated.**

CASUALTY REPORT (FOR DECEASED SPONSORS)

If the Sponsor died while on active duty, please upload a copy of the casualty report.

APPLICATION SCHEDULE

Use the Application Schedule to determine when the application should be submitted in order to receive funds for the semester/term you plan to attend.
Your application submission date determines which semesters/terms you are eligible for.

Example: If you submit your application in January 2027, you cannot receive funds for Fall 2026. Your application will only be reviewed for Spring 2027 and Summer 2027.

Note: AER cannot award funds for any semester/term that has already ended when an application is received.

Mrs. Patty Shinseki Spouse Scholarship Program 2026-2027 Academic Year Application Schedule			
	Month of Application Submission	Notification of Awards	Scholarship Funds Disbursed to Educational institutions
2026	June	July 15th	Fall: late June/July Spring: December Summer: May
	July	August 15th	Fall: August Spring: December Summer: May
	August	September 15th	Fall: September Spring: December Summer: May
	September	October 15th	Fall: October Spring: December Summer: May
	October	November 15th	Fall: November Spring: January Summer: May
	November	December 1st	Fall: December Spring: January Summer: May
	December	January 15th	Spring: January Summer: May
	2027	January	February 15th
February		March 15th	Spring: March Summer: May
March		April 15th	Spring: April Summer: May
April		May 15th	Spring: May Summer: May
May		June 15th	June
June		July 15th	July
July		August 15th	August
August		on a weekly basis	August/September